

"THE TRUTH SHALL MAKE YOU FREE."—CHRIST.

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A STORY OF POPE SIXTUS.

WHEN Cardinal Montalto assumed the tiara under the title of Sixtus V. he speedily threw off his disguise which had enveloped his former life, smoothed the wrinkles from his now proud forehead, raised his piercing eyes—heretofore cautiously veiled by their downcast lids—and made the astounded conclave know that in place of a docile instrument they had elected an inflexible master. Many glaring abuses existed in Rome, and these the new Pope determined to reform. It was the custom for the nobles, whether foreigners or natives, to be escorted, whenever they went out, by a numerous body of pages, valets, soldiers, and followers of all kinds, armed, like their masters, to the teeth. Sometimes a noble's "following" resembled an army rather than an escort; and it frequently happened that when two such parties met in a narrow street a violent struggle for precedence would take place, and blood be freely shed by those who had had no previous cause of quarrel. Hence came the warlike meaning—which it still retains—of the word *rencontre*. Sixtus V. resolved to put down this practice, and seized the opportunity of an unusually fierce combat taking place on Easter-day within the very precincts of St. Peter's.

Next morning an official notice was posted on the city walls, prohibiting every noble, without exception, from being followed by more than twenty attendants. Every one also, of whatever degree, who should himself carry, or cause his people to carry, any sort of fire-arms (pocket-pistols being especially mentioned) should thereby incur the penalty of death. At this notice Pasquin jested, and the nobles laughed, but no one dared to indulge in bravado until the following incident occurred.

Just after the promulgation of the Pope's order, Ranuccio Farnese, the only son of

the Duke of Parma, arrived in Rome. His first care was to wait on the new Pontiff; and being presented by his uncle, Cardinal Farnese, the young Prince met the reception due to his rank and to his merit. Already his talents and courage gave promise of his becoming a worthy successor to his father; and the Roman nobles vied with each other in doing honour to the heir of one of the richest duchies in the peninsula. On the evening after his arrival he was invited by Prince Cesarina to a magnificent banquet. Wine flowed freely, and the night waxed late, when the gay guests began to discuss the recent edict of his Holiness. Several wild young spirits, and among them Ranuccio, declared themselves ready to brave it openly. Next morning, however, when sobered by sleep, they all, with one exception, judged it expedient to forget their bravado. Ranuccio alone felt a strong desire to try conclusions with the Pope. Although a feudatory of the Holy See, he was not a Roman, and he was a Prince. Sixtus V. would probably think twice before touching a head that was almost crowned. Besides, youths of twenty love adventure, and it is not every day that one can enjoy the pleasure of putting a Pope in a dilemma. Ranuccio, in short, went to the Vatican and asked an audience of his Holiness. It was immediately granted, and the Prince, after having, according to the custom, knelt three times, managed adroitly to let fall at the very feet of Sixtus a pair of pistols loaded to the muzzle.

Such audacity could not go unpunished. Without a moment's hesitation the Pope summoned his guards, and ordered them to arrest and convey to Fort St. Angelo the son of the Duke of Parma, who had just condemned himself to death. War might be declared on the morrow; an outraged father might come, sword in hand, to demand the life and liberty of his son.

What cared Sixtus? He was resolved to restore but a corpse.

The news spread quickly. So much audacity on one side, and so much firmness on the other, seemed almost incredible. Cardinal Farnese hastened to the Vatican, and, falling at the feet of the Pope, with tears in his eyes pleaded his nephew's cause. He spoke of the youth of the culprit, and the loyalty of his father, who was then in Flanders fighting the battles of the Holy See. Ranuccio had been but two days in Rome—might he not fairly be supposed ignorant of the new enactment? Then he belonged to a powerful house, which it might not be prudent for even his Holiness to offend; and, finally, he was closely related by blood to the late Pope, Paul III.

The Holy Father's reply was cruelly decisive.

"The law," he said, "makes no distinction. A criminal is a criminal, and nothing more. The vicegerent of God on earth, my justice, like his, must be impartial; nor dare I exercise clemency, which would be nothing but weakness."

The Cardinal bent his head and retired.

Besieged incessantly by fresh supplications from various influential quarters, the Pope sent for Monsignor Angeli, the Governor of Fort St. Angelo. To him he gave imperative orders that precisely at twenty-four o'clock* that evening his illustrious prisoner's head should be struck off.

The Governor returned to the castle, and signified to Ranuccio that he had but two hours to live. The young man laughed in his face, and began to eat his supper. He could not bring himself to believe that he, the heir-apparent of the Duke of Parma, could be seriously menaced with death by an obscure monk, whose only title to the Pontificate seemed to have been his age and decrepitude. Yet speedily the threat seemed to him less worthy of derision, when he saw from his window a scaffold, bearing a hatchet and a block, in process of erection. But who can describe his dismay when his room was entered by a monk, who came to administer the last rites of the Church, followed by the executioner, asking for his last orders!

Meantime Cardinal Farnese was not idle. He consulted with his friend, Count Olivares, ambassador from the court of Spain, and they resolved to attempt to obtain by stratagem what had been refused to their prayers. Two precious hours remained.

"Our only plan," said the Cardinal, "is to stop the striking of all the public clocks in Rome! Meantime do you occupy Angeli's attention."

His eminence possessed great influence in the city, and, moreover, the control of the public clocks belonged to his prerogative. At the appointed hour, as if by magic, time changed his noisy course into a silent flight. Two clocks, those of St. Peter's and St. Angelo, were put back twenty minutes. Their proximity to the prison required this change, and the Cardinal's authority secured the inviolable secrecy of every one concerned in the plot.

The execution was to be private; but Olivares, in his quality of ambassador, was permitted to remain with the Governor. A single glance assured him that the clock was going right—that is to say that it was quite wrong. Already the inner court was filled with soldiers under arms, and monks chanting the solemn *Dies Ira*. Every thing was prepared save the victim. Olivares was with Angeli, and a scene commenced at once terrible and burlesque. The ambassador, in order to gain time, began to converse on every imaginable subject, but the Governor would not listen.

"My orders," he said, "are imperative. At the first stroke of the clock all will be over."

"But the Pope may change his mind." Without replying, the terrible Angeli walked impatiently up and down the room, watching for the striking of his clock. He called; a soldier appeared. "Is all prepared?" All was prepared; the attendants, like their master, were only waiting for the hour.

"'Tis strange," muttered the Governor. "I should have thought—"

"At least," interposed Olivares, "if you will not delay, do not anticipate." And monsignor resumed his hasty walk between the door and the window, listening for the fatal sound which the faithful tongue of the clock still refused to utter.

Despite of the delay, however, the fatal

* In Italy the hours are reckoned from one to twenty-four, commencing at sunset.

hour approached. Ten minutes more, and Ranuccio's fate would be sealed.

Meanwhile the Cardinal repaired to the Pope. As he entered, Sixtus drew out his watch, and his eyes sparkled with revengeful joy. On the testimony of that unerring time-piece Ranuccio was already executed.

"What seek you," asked his Holiness.

"The body of my nephew, that I may convey it to Parma. At least let the unhappy boy repose in the tomb of his ancestors."

"Did he die like a Christian?"

"Like a saint," cried the Cardinal trembling at a moment's delay. Sixtus V. traced the following words: We order our Governor of Fort St. Angelo to deliver up to his eminence the body of, Ranuccio Farnese." Having sealed it with the Pontifical signet he gave it to the Cardinal.

Arrived at the palace gates, Farnese, agitated between fear and hope, hastened to demand an entrance. A profound silence reigned within, broken only by the distant note of the *De Profundis*. He rushed toward the court. Was he too late?—had his stratagem succeeded? One look would decide. He raised his eyes—his nephew still lived. His neck bare, and his hands tied, he knelt beside the block, between a priest and the executioner, faintly uttering the words of his last prayer. Suddenly the chanting ceased; the Cardinal flew toward the Governor. Ere he could speak his gestures and his countenance lied for him.

"A pardon!—a pardon!" exclaimed Olivares.

The soldiers shouted. The executioner began to unloose his victim, when a sign from Angeli made him pause. The Governor read and re-read the missive.

"The body of Ranuccio Farnese!" he repeated; the criminal's name would suffice. Why these words "the body of?"

"What stops you?" cried the Cardinal, at that perilous moment looking paler than his nephew.

"Read!" replied Angeli, handing him the Pope's letter.

"Is that all?" said his eminence, forcing a smile and pointing to the clock. "Look at the hour; it still wants two minutes of the time, and I received that paper from his Holiness more than a quarter of an hour since."

The Governor bowed; the argument was irresistible. Ranuccio was given up to his deliverers. A carriage, with four fleet horses, waited outside the prison, and in a few moments the Cardinal and the young prince were galloping along the road to Parma. Just then the clocks of Rome pealed forth in unison, as if rejoicing that by their judicious silence they had gained their master's cause. It might be well if the lawyers in our day would sometimes follow their example.

Monsignor Angeli, as the chronicle relates, was rather astonished at the rapid flight of time after his prisoner's departure. In fact, the next hour seemed to him as short as its predecessor was long. This phenomenon, due to the simple system of compensation, was ascribed by him to the peaceful state of his conscience. Although inflexible in the discharge of what he esteemed his duty, he was in reality a kind hearted man, and felt sincere pleasure at what he honestly believed to be Ranuccio's pardon.

On the morrow the ambassador was the first to congratulate Sixtus V. with admirable *sang froid*, on his truly pious clemency. Olivares was only a diplomatist, but he played his part as well as if he had been a cardinal, and made every one believe that he had been the dupe of his accomplice. He had good reason for so acting. His master, Philip II. seldom jested, more especially when the subject of the joke was the infallible head of the Church; and he strongly suspected that the clocks of Madrid might prove less complaisant than those of Rome.

Poor Angeli was the only sufferer. For no other crime than that of not wearing a watch the Pope deprived him of his office, and imprisoned him for some time in Fort St. Angelo. As to Cardinal Farnese, renouncing all the praises and congratulations of his friends at Rome, he prudently remained an absentee.

I HAVE NO ENEMIES.—The ferocious Spanish general Narvaez, when on his death-bed, was exhorted by the priest to forgive his enemies. With a grim smile at his confessor's simplicity he answered, "Enemies, holy father, I have none; I have shot them all."

THE RELIGIOUSNESS OF THE WRITINGS AND CHARACTER OF CHARLES DICKENS.

BY THE REV. R. E. B. MACLELLAN.

THE moral influence of the works of the great fictionist we have so recently lost is admitted on all hands, and has been testified to from the pulpit by the Dean of Westminster, the Dean of Manchester, and Professor Jowett; but it may not have struck the casual reader how often a spirit of religiousness is to be found scattered here and there throughout his wonderful tales—a religiousness so spontaneous, so simple, yet so real, and expressed in language so exquisite, that it stirs the soul to its innermost depths. Three illustrations are all that I can, in the space allotted to me, submit to my readers, but they will be quite sufficient to show that I have not made this statement without adequate warrant.

In the "Old Curiosity Shop," referring to the death of dear "Little Nell," Dickens desires to state the conclusive and undoubted fact, that the early removal of the pure and the loving is a source of unnumbered blessings to the survivors, in the holy feelings which it awakens in their bosoms, and he states it thus:—

"Oh! how hard it is to take to heart the lesson that such deaths will teach, but let no man reject it, for it is one that all must learn, and it is a mighty universal truth. When death strikes down the innocent and young, for every fragile form from which he lets the parting spirit free a hundred virtues rise in shapes of mercy, charity, and love, to walk the world and bless it. Of every tear that sorrowing mortals shed on such green graves, some good is born, some gentler nature comes. In the Destroyer's steps there spring up bright creatures that defy his power, and his dark path becomes a way of light to heaven."

My next extract is from "Dombey and Son," and relates to the last hours of a woman who had been a grievous sinner, but was now treading the way of penitence, and looking beyond it to the house of peace. The passage exhibits Charles Dickens' veneration and affection for the New Testament, for the gospel it enshrines, and for the benignant proclaimer of that gospel, and is in these words:—

"Harriet complied, and read—the

eternal book for all 'the weary and heavy laden,' for all the wretched, fallen, and neglected of this earth. Read the blessed history in which the blind, lame, palsied, beggar, the criminal, the woman stained with shame, the shunned of all our dainty clay, has each a portion that no human pride, indifference, or sophistry, through all the ages that this world shall last, can take away, or by the thousandth atom of a grain reduce. Read the ministry of him, who, through the round of human life, and all its hopes and griefs, from birth to death, from infancy to age, had secret compassion for and interest in its every scene and stage, its every suffering and sorrowing."

This simple and beautiful religiousness, which crops out here and there in Dickens' writings is perhaps nowhere more full of pathos, nowhere so abundant in pity, nowhere so thoroughly Christian, as in the death of "Poor Joe" in "Bleak House." My readers will all remember "Poor Joe;" with no father, with no mother, with no friend, with no education, with no religion, a waif on the hungry sea of London life, driven hither and thither as if he merely cumbered this part of God's blessed universe. He comes at length to die of consumption in the shooting gallery of "George." A kind physician is standing by him, and Joe is lying in a heavy stupour: the narrative then proceeds thus:—

"He makes of a sudden a strong effort to get out of bed. 'Stay, Joe. What now?' 'It's time for me to go to that there berryin' ground, sir,' he returns, with a wild look. 'Lie down, and tell me what burying ground, Joe?' 'Where they laid him, as was werry good to me, werry good to me, indeed, he wos. It's time for me to go down to that there berryin' ground, sir, and ask to be put along with him. I wants to go there, and be berried. He used to say to me, 'I'm as poor as you to-day, Joe,' he ses. I wants to tell him that I am as poor as him, now, and have come there to be laid along with him.' 'By and by, Joe, by and by.' 'Ah, p'raps they wouldn't do it, if I was to go myself; but will you promise to have me took there, sir, and laid along with him?' 'I will, indeed.' 'Thankee, sir, thankee, sir. They'll have

to get the key of the gate afore they can take me in, for its allas locked. And there's a step there, as I used to clean with my broom. It's turned werry dark, sir, is there any light a-comin'?" 'It's coming fast, Joe.' . . . 'Joe, my poor fellow.' 'I hear you, sir, in the dark, but I'm a-groping', a-gropin'; let me catch hold of your hand.' 'Joe, can you say what I say?' 'I'll say anything as you say, sir, for I known it's good, sir.' 'OUR FATHER.—'Our Father, that's werry good, sir.' 'WHICH ART IN HEAVEN.'—'Art in Heaven. Is the light a-comin', sir?' 'It is close at hand. HALLOWED BE THY NAME.'—'Hallowed—be—Thy—' The light is come upon the dark benighted way—Dead! Dead, your Majesty! Dead, my Lords and Gentlemen! Dead, Right-Reverends, and Wrong-Reverends, of every order! Dead, men and women, born with heavenly compassion in your hearts! And dying thus around us every day."

None can easily doubt, I fancy, after this evidence, that a simple, yet deep feeling of religiousness was the substratum of the great novelist's character. We have seen how naturally and quietly, yet how all the more forcibly, it asserts itself in his writings; and the sincerity and uprightness of the man preclude us from supposing that he would give utterance to any emotion, especially on the highest and most sacred of all subjects, unless he actually felt it in the very depths of his soul. Remarkable, too, were the words of the last letter he was ever called to write, the day before his death:—"I have always striven in my writings to express veneration for the life and lessons of Our Saviour, because I felt it. . . . I never made proclamation of this from the housetops."

What now was our author's religion? We get a glimpse of one or two of its leading features in this very remarkable passage of his Will, "I commit my soul to the mercy of God, through our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ; and I exhort my dear children humbly to try and guide themselves by the teaching of the New Testament in its broad spirit, and to put no faith in any man's narrow construction of its letter, here or there." It is not difficult, I think, to gather from these words, interpreted as they should be, by the entire tone of his immortal fictions,

both what Charles Dickens' religion was not, and what it was. It was not a religion of mystery, but one so simple and intelligible, as to be readily accepted by the lowly and illiterate, as well as by the cultivated and refined. It was not a religion of exclusiveness, limiting the certainty of salvation to a single nation or a single church; but a universal religion, offering the possibility of salvation to men of all lands, all complexions, and of all creeds. It was not a religion of terror, representing the Most High as harsh, austere, inexorable, deaf to all prayers and entreaties till His mercy had been bought and paid for, but a religion of love, depicting him as willing, nay desirous and anxious, nay, resolved to elevate the most degraded of His own children at length to purity and its resulting bliss. It was not a religion of numerous forms and gorgeous ceremonials, but one which placed all merit and all acceptance in the condition of the worshipper's heart. It was not a religion of dogma merely, or of faith merely, or of emotion merely, but one whose best, whose only proofs of genuineness were to be found in actual deeds of affection, of compassion, of assistance, freely and copiously rendered to our fellow-creatures. It was not a complicated religion—its elements were few and simple, and probably included little more than these—the divine mission of Christ, an immortality after death, the essential Fatherhood of God, and the essential Brotherhood of Man; but these accompanied by such rules of duty as could be gleaned from the Beatitudes, the Lord's Prayer, and Ten Commandments, and the parables of the Good Samaritan and the Prodigal Son. And what is this but the religion which, with varying power, but in unvarying essence, is taught weekly in hundreds of neglected, if not sometimes despised, Unitarian chapels; and has been so taught unbrokenly for a century past. Oh! we can never be sufficiently thankful to our good Father in heaven, that he permitted our ancestors and ourselves to attain so easily conceptions of His dispositions and purposes, for which the mind is as yet unconsciously pining; and the most acceptable return we can make to Him for this precious heritage, will be the earnest offering to others of the blessings which have been accorded to ourselves.

MY TRIUMPH.

THE autumn-time has come,
On woods that dream of bloom,
And over purpling vines,
The low sun fainter shines.

The aster-flower is failing,
The hazel's gold is paling ;
Yet overhead more near
The eternal stars appear !

And present gratitude
Insures the future's good,
And for the things I see
I trust the things to be :

That in the paths untrod,
And the long days of God,
My feet shall still be led,
My heart be comforted.

O living friends who love me !
O dear ones gone above me !
Careless of other fame,
I leave to you my name.

Hide it from idle praises,
Save it from evil phrases ;
Why, when dear lips that spake it
Are dumb, should strangers wake it !

Let the thick curtain fall ;
I better know than all
How little I have gained,
How vast the unattained.

Not by the page word-painted
Let life be banned or sainted ;
Deeper than written scroll
The colours of the soul.

Sweeter than any sung
My songs that found no tongue ;
Nobler than any fact
My wish that failed to act.

Others shall sing the song,
Others shall right the wrong,—
Finish what I begin,
And all I fail of win.

What matter, I or they ?
Mine or another's day,
So the right word be said,
And life the sweeter made ?

Hail to the coming singers !
Hail to the brave light-bringers !
Forward I reach and share
All that they sing and dare.

The airs of heaven blow o'er me,
A glory shines before me,
Of what mankind shall be,—
Pure, generous, brave and free.

A dream of man and woman
Diviner but still human,
Solving the riddle old,
Shaping the Age of Gold.

The love of God and neighbour
An equal-handed labour ;
The richer life where beauty
Walks hand in hand with duty.

Ring, bells in unreared steeples,
The joy of unborn peoples.
Sound, trumpets far off blown,
Your triumph is my own !

Parcel, and part of all,
I keep the festival,
Fore-reach the good to be,
And share the victory :

I feel the earth move sunward,
I join the great march onward,
And take, by faith, while living,
My freehold of thanksgiving.

J. G. WHITTIER.

TWO STRANGE FACTS FOR UNITARIANS TO CONSIDER.

No person who reads the following, which we have taken from one of our American papers, will wonder at the opposition raised by some ministers of the Church of England against a Unitarian being a communicant in their church.

A Unitarian gentleman of the highest moral worth, travelling in England, called upon an American lady who had married an English Episcopal minister, and, learning that she was deeply interested in the poor of her husband's parish, left five pounds towards the repair of some thatched cottages. On returning to America, and remembering his interest, he sent, through a friend who happened to be writing to his old friend, five pounds more for the same object. Meanwhile the clergyman had learned from his wife this benefactor's theological opinions. The minister thought it not safe for his soul to apply money derived from a Unitarian source to the repairs of cottages in which Trinitarians were to live ! He returned the money, and with a request that all further communication, however laden with bank-notes, should cease between so dreadful a heretic and his Episcopal wife. The scruple is so unusual that it deserves record. Ordinarily we have found our money the only thing about Unitarians which was both orthodox and current. But this worthy man thought that our heresies actually polluted our cash, and that charity from a Unitarian was to be flung back in the face of its donor with righteous indignation.

His conduct would not have been justifiable if the benefactor of his poor had been an atheist, or even an immoral man ! Are the kind impulses of the bad to be quenched by Christians ? Is sweet charity to be choked at its work, because its theological theories are mistaken ? Is error not to be allowed to do unmistakeable good ?

The other case is more remarkable.

A clergyman in England, having written

a series of tales suited to the wants and tastes of the humbler classes—wonderfully adapted to general acceptance and usefulness—full of love, wisdom, and insight, and distinguished from so-called religious stories by a total absence of cant phrases, theological ear-marks, and obtrusions of sectarian littlenesses and prejudices, found to his surprise and, it finally turned out, to his horror, that they were obtaining a wonderful circulation under Unitarian influences—had been taken up, republished, given away by the thousands, and made prodigiously useful among the poor of Boston. No sooner had the fact—communicated to him under the natural expectation that his generous heart would swell with pious gratitude that his labours were extending so far beyond his expectations and denominational limits—come to his knowledge than he wrote his American correspondent a letter of self-accusation that he could have allowed himself to write anything that could be acceptable to Unitarians! expressing his deep sorrow and regret at the circulation of his stories, forbidding any further republication of them, and avowing a sincere mortification and contrition that he had ever conceived or given them to the world! Now, is not this the very Quixotism of bigotry? What sort of proper objections could an Episcopal clergyman feel to have his efforts to bless and save appreciated and extended by Unitarians? Oh! there must be something omitted if Unitarians can like what orthodox believers have said! But, then, they like the Apostles' Creed, and all the Saviour's words, and the whole New Testament! Have Unitarians no calling, necessity, or stimulus to extra exertions when facts like these come to their knowledge? They ought to be as firm as rocks in their freedom, as earnest as Luther in their spiritual reform, and as determined and as energetic as Hildebrand in urging a statesmanlike policy, in disseminating their enlarging and civilising opinions. Laziness, luke-warmness, and apathy should have no place in their hearts or actions. Let them arouse themselves to new and more vigorous demonstrations of their duty to Christ and humanity. And let our friends who join the Episcopalians go as missionaries of charity, toleration, and Christian intelligence; for they seem sorely needed.

THE SACRAMENTAL EXCITEMENT.

A PLEA FOR UNITARIAN ACTIVITY.

WE trust our readers will learn a practical lesson from the narrow-minded and unchristian howl that has been raised in the Church against a Unitarian partaking of the Lord's Supper. We have no desire to excite unkindly feeling, but we earnestly implore our people to see their duty, and to perform it. There is nothing more certain than this, that all the first communicants who sat round the table of the Master were Unitarians; not one of that band of men who in fear betrayed, deserted, and denied our Saviour had any idea that he with whom they walked and talked, and sat and eat, was the Almighty God. Human nature could not possibly have done as they did with such a momentous conception. The late Archbishop of Canterbury very properly said, "The grand disclosure of Christ's divine nature was not at that time formally made to them. In Mr. Belsham's own words, I would ask, When our Lord was so very cautious in discovering himself to be the Messiah, would he, at the same time, make no hesitation in declaring himself to be the very eternal God? What would have been the effect upon the apostles? Their faculties would be absorbed in terror and astonishment; no more free conversation, no more asking of questions, no more attempts to impose upon him or to rebuke him. The greatest awe and distance would instantaneously take place, and all endearing and familiar relations of master, instructor, companion, and friend, would at once have been broken off." The late Archbishop endorses all this; in fact, that they *were* Unitarians, one and all, who sat round the first table of the Lord. And now, those teachers of Christianity—so much wiser than their Master—regard Unitarians with horror. We have, surely, a great work to do—to present once more the truths which were taught in the apostolic age, and restore the faith and the practice which made the Church victorious then. We trust our friends everywhere will bestir themselves to make Unitarianism better known, and to show that it is the Christianity Christ taught, and the religion that the world now needs.



UNITARIAN MEETING-HOUSE, OLDBURY.

UNITARIAN MEETING-HOUSE,
OLDBURY.

Our engraving represents the second or third chapel restored and altered which has been built on the same spot. The first chapel would appear to have been erected in 1708, under the auspices of the Rev. William Turton, the ejected minister of Rowley, two miles distant, and one of the ministers of the old meeting-house, Birmingham, on land presented by John Turton, Esq., of "The Brades," near Oldbury. There can be no doubt, however, that Nonconformity was well represented in Oldbury at a much earlier period. The old church, pulled down about thirty years ago, and which seems to have been in the old Presbyterian chapel style, was at one time vested in the trustees under whose care the meeting-house was first put; but as long ago as 1786, when inquiry was made, no explanation of the cession of the building to the church could be obtained; but there is a tradition that a certain minister conformed, and invited the bishop to consecrate his chapel, which he did. The Nonconformist portion of the congregation erected the chapel whose history we now record. The following are noticeable events:—

In 1715, a body of High Church rioters having wrought havoc at West Bromwich chapel, came to Oldbury and set fire to the meeting-house while divine service was being conducted on Sunday morning—the congregation escaped with great difficulty.

In 1728, the trustees came into possession of five and a-half acres of land near Oldbury, devised two years before by John Price, of Halesowen, for the use of the poor, and supporting the minister of the meeting-house at Oldbury.

In 1784 the building was purchased in which the free school was begun three or four years previously, also the cottage and land adjoining the chapel, but how the funds (£140) were obtained is not stated.

In 1790 five acres more came to the trustees for the use of the poor from one Richard Nock, but whether by gift or purchase is not known.

In 1806 the chapel was rebuilt by subscription at a cost of between £300 and £400.

In 1817 Henry Hunt, Esq., of "The Brades," handed over to the trustees the house and garden adjoining the school,

purchased by his father and others for the use of the minister.

In 1862 the chapel was restored and modernised, all the interior (except the gallery) being refitted, at a cost of £300, contributed by subscription. Recently the gallery has been repaired to correspond with the floor, and further improvements effected at a cost of £60. A beautiful mural tablet has also been erected to the memory of the late senior minister. The general appearance of the interior is chaste and rich, the outside speaks for itself.

The record of the ministry at Oldbury is very exact and very brief. The pulpit was supplied by the ministers of the old meeting-house, Birmingham, from the foundation of the chapel to the year 1776, when the Rev. William Proctor became settled minister. He was succeeded at his death in 1807 by the Rev. Samuel Griffiths, who, after a five years' ministry, resigned. The Rev. Timothy Davis then began his long ministry of thirty-three years, and was succeeded on his retirement to private life by the Rev. William McKean in 1845. In 1858 the present minister, the Rev. Henry McKean, was appointed co-pastor with his father, and in 1864 was elected his successor. The Rev. Herbert Jenkyns supplied for nine months in 1807, and the Rev. Samuel Goode for four months in 1812.

This account would be scarcely complete without a notice of the free school connected, of which the minister has always been the master. Originally, and even till 1845, only a small institution, with twenty free scholars, it has rapidly developed by the increasing value of property from mines and minerals, until there are now 200 in regular attendance. The large schoolroom was erected in 1851, under the superintendence of the late Rev. W. McKean, with funds lent freely by the late T. Hunt, Esq., of Handsworth, who, at the close of his long treasurership, presented his successor with £400, the balance due to him. This liberal friend of Oldbury bequeathed the congregation a parting gift of £50. Class-rooms have since been added, making the establishment very complete for educational or congregational purposes. Mr. J. J. Lynam is second master.

The congregation at Oldbury consists, since the town entered on its mining and

manufacturing career, of working people. It was never more numerous, or half as liberal, as now. There is a large and energetic committee to whom is owing the recent decoration of the chapel, which has been their ambition to render as beautiful and attractive as possible. All the seats are free and unappropriated, and there is an offertory at every service. The library contains 1000 volumes, the Sunday-school 150 scholars, sixteen teachers, and connected institutions.

CHRIST THE LIFE.

BY C. C. EVERETT.

THERE are two ways in which the life and work of Jesus Christ may be considered. One way is to form some theory of what his life and work ought to be, and to reason from this to what they were. The second way is to approach his life and work from the other side, to study them in their detail and their result, and to make our theories and our conceptions correspond with what we actually find to be the fact.

Of these methods the first has been the one most commonly pursued, and it is not strange that the results to which it has led have often been very far from the truth. The life of Jesus was simple, natural, and spontaneous. It was the free outgrowth of a noble and fresh nature. But, treated in the method just referred to, it becomes artificial and lifeless. We may find one example of this artificial character which has been given to the thought of Jesus, in the statement so often made, that he had a double nature. If Jesus was distinguished from other men in any one thing more than another it was perhaps in this, that his nature was so perfectly a unit. There are two elements, a higher and a lower, in every nature. In most men there is between these strife or separation. In the ideal man these two natures are fused together into one. Instead of a double consciousness, a double impulse, a double aim, there is a single consciousness, a single impulse, a single aim. It was in great part because of this accomplished simplicity and unity of nature that Jesus so impressed himself upon the hearts of men.

We find this artificialness very marked in the theories that have been held in regard to the work of Christ. It has been seen that his work was different from that of

any other, that the Christian religion differs from any other, and thus it has been thought necessary to find some outward mark of difference, some single element distinguishing the religion of Jesus from any other religion, and the work of Jesus from the work of any other, by which they might be, as it were, marked and labelled and thus set apart from all others. It is sad to see the force and the strain that have been put upon this life, so beautiful in its simplicity and freedom, to make it conform with these mechanical theories. The effect is like that of taking some beautiful wild flower and pressing the life out of it in a botanist's herbarium.

The harshest and ghastliest of these theories, by which the work of Christ was to be distinguished from that of any other, is one which leaves the life altogether out of the account. It makes the life nothing, the death everything. According to this theory the great end of the mission of Jesus was his death. In that he suffered the penalty which was due to the race of man. Christ, according to this view, came into this world simply that he might die in it. His life is, we might almost say, an accident. If it had been left out, and in some way he had died without living, his work would have been as complete as it is now. It is not possible here to discuss this theory at any length, and perhaps a single sentence from the lips of Jesus may take the place of a more formal and prolonged argument. In his prayer before his death, Jesus cried, "I have finished the work which Thou gavest me to do." Now with any latitude of interpretation and explanation that may be claimed, we cannot conceive that if the one grand element in the work of Christ was his atoning death, he should, before his death, exclaim that he had finished the work which was given him to do.

When the idea has been given up that the one great end of the mission of Jesus was his death, there has still been felt by many the need of some other single and special mark by which the work of Christ should be distinguished, and without which his life and work would sink to the common level. Perhaps the most common theory, next to that referred to above, is the one which makes Christ the revealer.

More than one truth has been put forward as the test and the proof of this

supremacy. It has been urged that our faith in immortality rests upon Christianity. But men have always believed in immortality, or at least, so far as our knowledge of history goes, there have always been men who believed in immortality. We find grand and beautiful expressions of this belief through all antiquity. The Fatherhood of God is another truth which Christianity has been sometimes thought to have revealed. But we find that it is not peculiar to Christianity to call God Father.

The moral precepts and religious utterances of Jesus are often put forward as peculiar to Christianity, and the great mark which separates it from all other religions. But history disputes this claim also. Men bring forth moral precepts which have been thought peculiar to Christianity, but which they have found scattered afar. They bring the petitions that Jesus uttered, even the petitions of the Lord's Prayer, to show that other lips before his had uttered them. Many seem to fancy that thereby the distinction is lost between Christianity and the other religions of the earth. These seem to rise towards Christianity and Christianity to sink towards them; and all to be tending to the same level.

The difficulty is precisely similar to that which arises in the comparison of man with the lower animals. Many have shown much anxiety to find some special distinguishing mark that should separate man from any other creature. It should be some element of the physical structure, some conformation of the brain that should show that man stood on a different level from that occupied by any other creature on the earth; or at least there should be some mental faculty of which the germ could not be found elsewhere.

The question might indeed be asked with some degree of plausibility, why men are not simply animals, or why some of the higher animals are not men.

The only answer that can be given to the question why the higher animals are not men, is the child's answer, Because they are not. With man there entered a new life and power upon the earth. In this new life everything is to a certain extent what it was in the old. But yet everything is different. The beasts roamed the forest, the monkeys chattered in the trees, as they had done since their creation, as they are doing now. But in some

way or other, by some creation or transformation, man came. He came with his faiths, his aspirations, his disquietudes, his passions, and his sins. He came, and the face of the world was transformed by his presence.

Similar to this relation between man and the lower animals is that of Christianity to the earlier religions of the world. It is said, with a certain degree of truth, that the elements of Christianity may be found scattered through these earlier religions. It is said that Christianity brought nothing into the world. Thus the question presses, why were not these earlier religions Christianity in all but the name? The only answer is as before, Because they were not. They were not Christianity because they did not do the work of Christianity, because they did not have its inspiration and its consolation, because they did not have its faith, and its love, and its purpose. Christianity came, and the world has felt its transforming power. It is not by accident that the years number themselves afresh from the starting point. The world began at that point a new life. If Christians had not marked that as the starting point of a new epoch the general student of history would have done it for himself.

And here, as before, the difference is only that which arises from the influx of a higher and more intense life. This life manifests itself in two ways. The first is in the disentanglement and re-arrangement of the elements in which it takes form. This re-arrangement, this concentration and grouping, are equivalent to a new creation. The separate petitions of the Lord's Prayer are sought out, and are found scattered here and there, as one and another of them had been uttered before the time of Christ. But yet these scattered petitions are not the Lord's Prayer, as it sprang simple, beautiful, and perfect out of the heart of Jesus—that prayer which has been, ever since he uttered it, the medium through which the tenderest and most earnest aspirations of humanity have uttered themselves. The truths of the Sermon on the Mount may be found scattered here and there among the earlier religions of the world, but for this very reason they are not the Sermon on the Mount. They are not merely scattered, but they are mingled with what is super-

sions or degrading. The beauty of the Sermon on the Mount is its concentration and its purity. There is in it no discordant element. It is as if the noblest thoughts, the purest precepts, the tenderest consolations of the ages had recognised the voice of their Master, and had gathered thronging at his summons, leaving behind them whatever did not belong to them. It reminds one of the saying, "The Dead shall hear the voice of the son of man and live." It was as when a substance that had been held in solution by some foreign element crystallises at a touch, gathering itself out of all impurity and admixture into one perfect and shining form. One might as well compare the scattered stones of a pasture to the glory of some complete cathedral, because the stones are of the same nature as those out of which the cathedral is built.

The second form in which this fulness of life that we find in Christianity manifests itself is that of intensity. The truths of Christianity do not merely group themselves into a perfect whole, but each one of them gleams with a more intense light than that which it had before possessed. The Fatherhood of God, the spiritual life, the immortal life, the brotherhood of man, are in the heart of Jesus, and thus in the teachings of Jesus, like new truths—so intense has each one of them become. The Fatherhood of God is a real thing with him. It is an infinite tenderness that follows and watches over every child of man, that follows the sufferer into his grief, that follows the sinner even into his guilt. The immortal life is a reality. The spirits of the departed are not, as in the classic thought, mere "shades." The spirit here and hereafter is no shadow, but the one reality. So love, with him—the common love that binds or should bind all souls—was not a theory merely but a passion. Thus it is that truths became so changed that though it may be proved to the world that they are old, yet the world will never cease to look upon them as new. In this intensity consists the chief element of Christianity. This was indeed the new life which united these elements as well as gave the power to each.

We see this illustrated in every period of Christianity. The power of Christ does not reside in those who believe most ex-

actly what he did, but in those whose love and faith are akin to his. Without this love and faith the heart sinks into heathendom, even while the mind is filled with Christian light. The love of God and the brotherhood of man become mere theories, and the spirit becomes again merely a "shade." But when a heart has anything like his intensity of faith in God and love for man, then, although the mind may be held in bondage by some cold and dark creed utterly at war with all the teachings of Christ, we yet recognise the Christian and see accomplished the Christian work.

A part of the work of Christ was done once for all. The moral and spiritual sense is in some respects akin to the intellect. Truths and relations once brought home to it maintain themselves by their own authority. Even if Jesus were forgotten the world could hardly become what it was before he lived. There are heights which, once gained, cannot be lost. But another part of his work is always accomplishing itself afresh through him. Faith, earnestness, love, conviction, these propagate themselves from heart to heart.

The life and the spirit of Jesus are thus a source and centre of life, and love, and power, for all who come within the reach of this influence. As the dead have been said in the traditions of the Church to have caught life simply from contact with the bones of some buried saint, so the lifeless spirit may catch vital force even from the poor fragments that remain to us of the speech and varied life of Jesus; while the strongest may gather from him new strength, and the most loving new earnestness. And in this intensity of life and this power to impart life are to be found now and always the grand peculiarity of the work of Jesus. It is not so much that his words reveal truth to the minds of men, as that men catching his spirit and his life, see something of what he saw, and all things in some degree as he saw them. This was the truth that John uttered when, at the beginning of his Gospel, he would present in a single phrase his conception of the nature and work of him whose life and history he was about to unfold to us. "In him was life," he cried, "and the life was the light of men."—*Old and New.*

JOHN STUART MILL says: "If Christians would teach infidels to be just to Christianity, they should themselves be just to infidelity."

SCIENCE AND RELIGION.

THE NEBULAR THEORY.

THERE can be no real hostility between science and religion. There may be hostility between some theories of science and some theories of religion, but the devout searcher after the facts of religion and the facts of science must ultimately discover that the facts are not in conflict :

"Theories which thousands cherish,
Pass like clouds that sweep the sky :
Creeds and dogmas all may perish,
Truth itself can never die."

And we are interested in the truths of science and religion ; and every encouragement must be offered and a hearty welcome proclaimed to the searcher after truth and the discoverer who comes home laden with what he believes to be truth in any and every department of human life. We have never met with a production of any kind, of a philosophical character, worthy of a moment's attention that denies the existence of a Primal Will, or Latent Force, or Unseen Power as necessary to the existence of the creation. Huxley says it would be absurd to deny the existence of God, and he is supposed to be the most profound investigator and the most frank expounder of the fundamental principles of the development theory. And we can speak for ourselves that we have, after a long course of reading and thought, come to the conclusion that the work of creation has been going on for millions of ages, and will still go on for millions more ; we have not, therefore, a less but a deepened reverence and trust in the Heavenly Father, and a desire to obey Him, above the feelings we possessed when we believed that all things had been created in the twinkling of an eye.

When the Saviour said, "The earth bringeth forth fruit of herself, first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn," he recognised a law of production and development that no one can deny, he pointed out a fact that no one ought to dispute. And that law of continuous growth and improvement possibly pervades, not only a grain of corn, but all things. And the wisdom and goodness and power of God are surely as manifest in the gradual growth of the whole creation from chaos to order, from a mere floating, attenuated matter up to the magnificence and beauty of the universe, as in the ear of corn. It is as-

sumed by the believers in this nebular theory, first hinted at by Laplace, that a mere fire mist impressed with the law of gravitation and crystallisation would form sun, moon, and planets, and that the same unvarying laws through ages of ages might produce all the rich luxury, the untold beauty, and the diversified life we now witness, and the feelings and the hopes we now experience. But then a competent force, a divine wisdom and inscrutable will, is assumed as the basis of this organising and perfecting process. If atoms of matter develop in ages into archangels of light, all that the analyst handles or sees he confesses is matter, and behind this he admits there is a power he cannot touch or analyse. That is sufficient for the religionist, the believer in a spiritual nature, an immortal principle, and a God ; and out of this rock our faith, hope, love, and purity, and all transcendent aspirations may be fairly hewn. The author of "Vestiges of Creation" says, in working out his problem of creation from nebulous matter, "God created animated beings, as well as the earthly theatre of their being, is a fact so powerfully evidenced, and so universally received, that I at once take it for granted." This is not atheism, and we have but to quote the following words of his to show that it is not pantheism, "The Eternal One has arranged for every thing beforehand, and trusted all to the operations of the law of His appointment, Himself being ever present in all things." "The production of an insect, if it did take place, on the theory I have assumed, was as clearly an act of the Almighty himself as if He had fashioned it with His hand." These are extracts from a book that has gone the whole length of the development theory, and which cannot be exceeded by the boldness of its statements ; and yet its author was a firm believer in a *personal* God, who devised and prearranged His works, and who exists in the midst of all their operations.

Scientific men agree there is much discovered that upholds the theory of gradual creation. The hypothesis we have hinted assumes that all in the heavens and the earth have been in the course of ages formed of a kind of thin floating matter, infinitely extended in space. That the most distant stars were once a connected part of the great sheet of mist, and becoming

detached, and under the same law of gravitation, we have a universe of worlds encircling one another, system on system, all of one family, governed by one law, fulfilling a destiny and affording a sphere of life prearranged and superintended by the Almighty God. This theory, that all we see of solid ground and shining stars were once thin air, floating in the infinitude of space, has received a very wide spread approbation, and is capable of some proof. The theory assumes a common origin and element, and Sir John Herschel observes, "The resemblance among bodies is now perceived to be a true family likeness, they (the heavens and the earth) are bound up in one chain, interwoven in one web of mutual relation and harmonious agreement, subjected to one pervading influence which extends from the centre to the furthest limits of that great system of which all of them, the earth included, must be regarded as members." As the Divine Being has made of one blood all the tribes of men, so of one element all the different systems of the universe may possibly be formed. And since the above was uttered, confirmatory evidence has been discovered by the spectrum analysis that gases and solids of the earth are identical with the substances which compose the sun, moon, planets, and stars. Other and still more striking correspondences in the various motions and planes of the heavenly bodies bear out the theory of a simultaneous formation from one root, that a fundamental unity pervades and belongs to all worlds and systems of worlds; the earth and the laws belonging to our globe may be taken as a sample and akin to those multitudes of worlds scattered like starry seed through all space.

This theory, then, at its very basis presents a magnificent conception: that out of a thin vapour floating in the firmament—this is the point, at which the man of science commences his guesses at the *modus operandi* of creation—God made the heavens and the earth; and what untold ages must have passed before the different pages of the world's history of conflict and change were stamped with the imprint they now bear, which has fulfilled the behest of the Almighty, who sits upon the circle of the heavens and guides all the issues with unerring wisdom and unbounded love!

It is to say little for science when we only affirm that it has not weakened our

faith in an overruling Providence. It is intended to do more than this negative service. The loftiness of God, the infinite wisdom and goodness of God come more prominently forward in view of this ever extending drama of creation. The voice of nature explicitly declares that the Power which called into being those magnificent worlds is not weakened by time nor subject to decay. The eternity of God comes strikingly before us in view of the nebular theory of the universe, and that in the majesty of his reign a thousand years are but as a day, while at the same time we feel that every single day of our life is lightened up and provided for and blessed by the wisdom and beneficence and changes of ten thousand years. The present is the outcome of the processes of cycles and periods which baffle our imagination; and we have this day poured into our cup of life the juices which have been ripening for thousands of ages. We are also led to believe that in God's government and plans there is no positive and irremediable evil; that the appearances which, to our limited view, are so pregnant with change and destruction are in His mind the sources of a permanent good, and that God's view is the only true view of creation and its results; that all His plans are drawn in wisdom and mercy:

"That nothing walks with aimless feet,
That not one life shall be destroyed,
Or cast as rubbish to the void,
When God has made the pile complete."

HINDOO FEMALE SOCIETY.

BY A HINDOO.

THE women of our country, as a general rule, are not educated either in literature or any art. They are left to grow to old age without any knowledge of the world except their household duties. There are at present in Bengal some lady schools, but the propriety of imparting education to women not being appreciated by a large number of people, female education is confined to a very few families; it has not as yet made its way to the masses.

The girls are allowed in their childhood to play with various sorts of toys, representing various sorts of domestic articles, such as cooking utensils, drinking pots, plates, &c. They are never taught to read and write, nor to know any information of the world. They are

brought up with the same care as sheep and cows, to prepare them for certain physical ends, the chief object of their parents being in their case to nourish them in such a way that they may look beautiful and healthy and become acceptable to their husbands when married. Their mind is not at all thought of—left waste, without cultivation. When they arrive at their proper age of marriage, which is from seven to ten years, the whole anxiety of their parents is to look for good husbands, and they employ a sort of marriage broker, with good promises, to procure good bridegrooms. The parents become quite depressed if they see their daughters grow in age without marriage, for if they arrive at the age of teens before marriage the parents consider themselves at once lost to society. The women of our country have children at the age of thirteen or fourteen, and, in several cases, at the age of eleven; consequently, it is considered safe to marry their girls before ten years. It has been observed in very many instances that poor parents despairing of means to marry their girls, become anxious, and sacrificing all honour of caste and position, beg from door to door for help for the marrying of their girls; and our people attach so much importance to early marriage, that they consider it a great duty to assist in time of need, and to rescue a man from such circumstances is considered a great and good work in this world.

The women being married at such an early age are taken to their father-in-law's house to live with their husbands. What do they find there? Not the peace and happiness of marriage life. They find themselves in distressing conditions—they find mother-in-law, father-in-law, husband's sisters, and all sorts of relations belonging to their husband, to whom they are to pay implicit obedience. Brides are required by Hindoo customs to be submissive to their superior relatives, and satisfy them by their attention, obedience, and respect. But as it is known to all that one cannot satisfy all, they are rebuked by one, beaten by others; they become actually depressed; their reason, peace, and happiness are lost in the constant reprimand of their superior relations. Far from receiving instruction from their superiors, they receive such threatenings as only conduce to provoke evil-feelings in

the mind. They are not taught how to do several duties to the world, but they are required cruelly to discharge all such duties as they know not at all. There is no life more miserable than that of our women. In an age when they require all sorts of encouragement, instruction, caress, and good treatment from all, they really sink into cares, anxieties, struggles, and distractions of mind. These tell very heavily on their youthful hearts, and even on their health. I know, by personal experience, many cases of unhappy women, who, in order to save themselves from such torment, took recourse to suicide. It may seem to many that I exaggerate the case, but, far from being exaggeration, I know so intimately the distressing condition of my countrywomen, that I regret that I cannot express all that I know on the subject, and I cannot feel myself justified until I relate to you all their circumstances, in order to excite your sympathy for them. On this subject you shall hear more in the following number.

WHAT IS WAR?

SIR WALTER RALEIGH said "that the practices of war are so hateful to God that were not His mercies infinite it were in vain for those of that profession to hope for any portion of them."

NAPOLEON said that "war was the business of barbarians."

THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON said that "men who have nice notions of religion have no business to be soldiers."

SIR CHARLES NAPIER said that "to overcome all feelings of religion is generally the means of making a warrior."

Cecil, Lord Burleigh, in a letter to his son Robert, says:—"I cannot consent that thou shalt train up thy sons in wars. For he that sets up his rest to live by that profession can hardly be an honest man or a good Christian."

LORD BACON says:—"I am of opinion that unless you could bray Christianity in a mortar, and mould it into a new paste, there is no possibility of a holy war."

LORD CLARENDON says:—"We cannot make a more lively representation and emblem to ourselves of hell than by the view of a kingdom in war."

BURKE says that "war suspends all the rules of moral obligation."

WAYSIDE GATHERINGS.

STATE OF ROME.—Statistics show that more than 70 per cent. of the children born in Rome are illegitimate.

THE BISHOPS OF OLD.—Chrysostom charged the whole episcopal order of his day with avarice and licentiousness. He said that the number of bishops who could be saved bore a very small proportion to those who would be damned.

THE ARGUMENT AGAINST TRANSUBSTANTIATION ANTICIPATED BY CICERO.—"When we call corn Ceres and wine Bacchus, we use truly a familiar kind of speech, but do you think that any one is so mad as to believe that to be a god which he feeds upon?"

CONVERTED.—"Sally," cried a girl, looking down from the upper story of a grocery, addressing another girl who was trying to enter at the front door, "we've all been to camp-meeting, and we have been converted; so, when you want milk on Sunday, you'll have to come around to the back door."

SATAN'S GOVERNMENT.—The author of *Credo* says: "The Scriptures everywhere assert, by word and type, that Satan's government, though powerful and aggressive, exists only by permission, both as to extent and duration—that it is entirely under the control of the Almighty—so much so, that one word from his lips would banish Satan forever from the earth. He could not strike another blow, destroy another victim, or deceive another heart, were God to say, 'He should not.' Is it not strange, indeed, according to orthodoxy, that God does not speak that word? So it seems to me."

FAITH IN THE EXISTENCE OF A DEVIL.—William von Humboldt says: "The thought of a hostile, persecuting power, has always been foreign to my mind. I could never accept those interpretations which assume the existence of such a being who finds pleasure in evil, and is the enemy of all good. I consider the passages in the New Testament which appear to favour such a notion as figurative expressions, suited to the then Jewish views, and meant to convey the idea of the evil which man has to fight against in himself, even though good on the whole, and free as he thinks, from the inclination to sin."

POPULAR PREACHING.—A country woman, whilst on a visit to a large manufacturing town in Scotland, went to hear a celebrated divine, whose fame had often been sounded in the ears of the worthy dame. On her return she was asked her opinion of "the Star of the West," as he was often called. "O," said she, "he's a wonderfu' preacher—a great preacher." "Well well, that's all true," said the other; "but what do you think of his views of doctrinal points, and his powers of expounding the Scriptures?" "O," said the worthy critic, "I dinna ken; but he's a wonderfu' man." "But he's a wonderfu' man." "But what did he say?" "O, he just gaed on, and gaed on, and chappit on the Bible, and raised his twa hands abune his head, and then gaed on, and then he swat and rubbit his brow, and when he stoppit, he looked as if he could have said mair than when he began—O, he's a wonderfu' grand preacher!"

EXAMPLE.—Michael Angelo once entered a palace at Rome, where Raphael was ornamenting the ceiling, and as Angelo walked around he saw that all the figures were too small for the room. Stopping a moment, he sketched on one side an immense head, proportioned to the chamber; and when his friend asked him why, his reply was, "I criticise by creation, not by finding fault."

BENEVOLENT AUDUBON.—Many things in the life of Audubon have charmed us exceedingly, but what moved us most of all, perhaps, was a little experience that he had during a stay in Edinburgh, when his circumstances were straitened, and which he tells in his journal in his own simple and touching way: "I was sauntering along the streets, thinking of the beautiful aspects of nature, meditating on the power of the great Creator, on the beauty and majesty of his works, and of the skill he had given man to study them, when the whole train of my thoughts was suddenly arrested by a ragged, sickly-looking beggar boy. His face told of hunger and hardship, and I gave him a shilling and passed on. But turning again the child was looking after me, and I beckoned to him to return. Taking him back to my lodgings, I gave him all the garments I had which were worn, added five shillings in money, gave him my blessing, and sent him away rejoicing, feeling myself as if God had smiled on me."

SUDDEN CONVERSION.—My own observation has not inspired me with great faith in sudden conversions. Some thirty years ago an orthodox clergyman, describing to me the spontaneity of his temperament, said: "When I made up my mind to come to Jesus, I wasn't half an hour about it." If "coming to Jesus" means the adoption of his rules, and an earnest effort to bring our lives into conformity thereto, it seems to me that it requires a much longer time than half an hour. When I resided in the Valley of the Connecticut I was brought into relations with several who had done up their religion in short order, and I soon learned to avoid traffic with them, because I could never get a full pound or a full quart of anything at their hands. Froude says: "Show me a people whose trade is dishonest, and I will show you a people whose religion is a sham." The Society of Friends never relied on any theological forty-horse power for "bringing souls to Jesus;" and overflowing measure is, in common parlance, called "quaker measure."—*Maria Child.*

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